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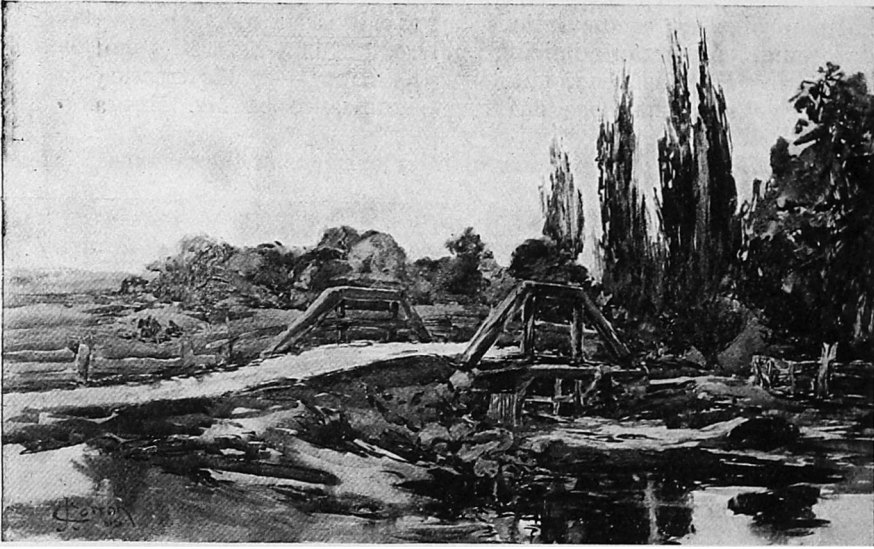
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THE KING'S HIGHWAY  
By John W. Cotton

## SALON OF THE DILETTANTI—XIII

### MORGAN A FALSE FRIEND TO AMERICAN ART

The latest symptom of "Morganism"—the United Arts Club of London—which the money king had financed, and which he was reported to be willing to back to an unlimited extent, came up for discussion at the monthly meeting of the Salon, and provoked the question whether this man of millions with well-advertised artistic proclivities were a true or a false friend to legitimate art interests.

Naturally—there was never a potentate without his votaries and vilifiers—opinion was divided: but negative convictions ruled. Apropos of the new English institution, one of the Dilettanti irreverently asked if it were to be regarded as Mr. Morgan's coach or clearing house—the prospectus issued to the public curiously suggested both—and the remark elicited many a query calculated to turn prestige into pretense.

It was true, the Dilettanti admitted, that Mr. Morgan had been chosen president of America's greatest art museum, the Metropolitan of New York, and everybody interested had clapped his hands and said "ideal selection." It was true that in the last decade or so he had broken the world's record—a characteristic achievement in American effort—in putting millions into art treasures—all of which had been duly exploited—and that his Prince's Gate mansion in London and the Kensington museum, to say nothing of other places, were literally warehouses for his absurdly costly purchases. It was true that the magnate had of late spent more millions in preparing in New York a palatial

home for his art accumulations, supposedly as a memorial, so that in due course of time an admiring public might bow before its portals and say, "The King is dead, long live the King"—in his treasure house. But after all, what was the true significance of Mr. Morgan's art operations?

The Dilettanti fired a volley of interrogations at the magnate. Were



WILDWOOD  
By Thomas S. Moses

his stupendous purchases—well authenticated report had it that for three months this year he had spent a million dollars a month on his hobby—anything more than a conspicuously crude manifestation of the power of money? Had he done anything more worthy than to run a corner in masterpieces, and put genius in cold storage? Had he bought with the judgment of the true connoisseur—the man who knows—or had he been mainly a mark for schemers who had more interest in parting him and his money than in safeguarding his collection against artistic rubbish? Had all his vast expenditure of fortune for art objects contributed one jot or tittle to the pleasure or benefit of the American public, and would his possessions be a potent factor in American art development, if finally—the tariff being removed—they were to find resting place in his New York gallery?

Incident to Mr. Morgan's latest enterprise it had been announced in the press that he was "a staunch admirer of the modern artist at his best," and that he resented the fact that while "thousands of dollars were spent without hesitation on doubtful old masters, hundreds were grudged to the modern man," who very often in his way was greater than the old masters. And yet, could Mr. Morgan, would Mr. Morgan



SCENE IN DOBERON  
By W. C. Both

be willing to show how many, or how few, of his thousands had gone to the "modern men at their best," especially to the best masters of his own country?

Didn't he just the other day pay \$200,000 for Sir Thomas Lawrence's "Portrait of Miss Farren" (Artist born in 1769)—four times what any other egregiously enthusiastic collector would have offered for it? And could he show that in his whole career he had spent that amount of money to encourage and support the whole bunch of the best masters America had produced?

The fact was, the Moralist of the Dilettanti affirmed, such idiotic performances were little less than a crime against present-day art. Of course Mr. Morgan had a right to spend his money as he pleased—nobody questioned that. But had he a right to be termed a "patron of

art," any more than a man who undertook to run a corner on pork could with any degree of propriety be called a lover of hogs on the hoof?

Doubtless the fact that in 1863, thirty-three years after Lawrence's death, the Farren portrait was sold for \$444; and in 1897, sixty-seven years after the artist died, for \$11,250; and in 1906, seventy-six years after the painter's demise, for \$200,000, was a great satisfaction—to the dealers and speculators. This rallying to the front by Mr. Morgan perhaps helped to smooth Sir Thomas's pillow and make him sleep more contentedly his sleep of eternity in St. Paul's cathedral; possibly it made him less jealous of Sir Joshua his next-grave neighbor, who had similar streaks of patronage—after death. Happily, neither Reynolds nor Lawrence suffered during life; but this fact didn't take off the curse from the wake of the money-bags over defunct genius.

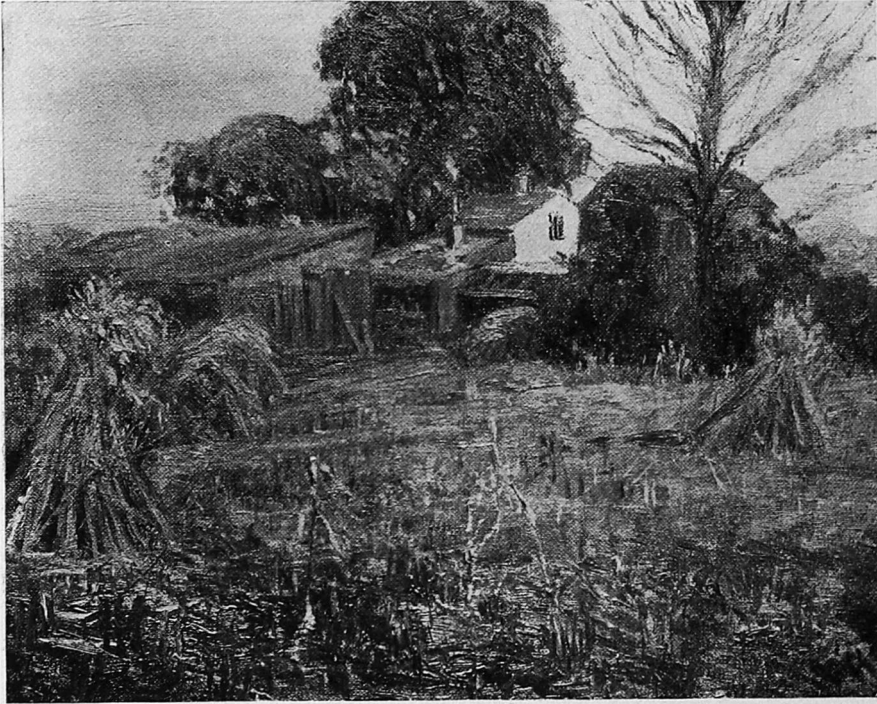
It had been surmised, the Moralist explained, that Mr. Morgan had an ambition to leave to New York a sort of Hertford House, such as the Hertford and Wallace families left to London. Unquestionably a very laudable ambition. But how about the *modus operandi* of the two enterprises? The Wallace collection was the accumulation of three generations of two families who had taste and good judgment, and who bought at reasonable but just prices. It was the growth of time, of culture, of sanity. Mr. Morgan's operations, on the other hand, were a species of megalomania, sometimes called in American parlance the "Pike's Peak or bust" policy. It was the making of a collection in a day, irrespective of cost, with no regard to sanity or equity, with no consideration whether this woful waste of the wherewithal were going to foster that most precious thing to any country, its native art.

Today the Wallace collection was one of the most honored heirlooms of England; it cost—by comparison with Morgan prices—but a trifle; but it took time, and patience, and judgment. And the dealers who sold to the Hertfords and Wallaces didn't make fortunes on the turn of a canvas.

The American collector didn't show the same spirit. Minerva was rapped full grown from the forehead of Jupiter—she didn't need a cradle, or wet nursing, or any of the rest of the foolishness incident to childhood. Why should J. Pierpont I. be bothered with an art nursling, and trust to J. Pierpont II. and J. Pierpont III. to feed and fatten it and otherwise attend to its growth, and shape—or warp—its character? Money would do it in a month or a year—spend. And he had spent.

Apropos of Morgan prices and patronage, behind all enterprises, the Moralist contended there should be a sufficient—and in art matters, at least, a worthy—reason. The Rape of the Sabines, of historic fame, might be excused, for had the Romans any desirable—or undesirable—feminine material at home to practice their gallantry on? The Goths and the Vandals invaded Rome with bludgeon and firebrand, and might perhaps be pardoned, for had they in their native wilds anything against which to vent their bellicosity except the elements, which didn't care a rap? But suppose, suggested the Moralist, that Americans should inaugurate a well-concerted rape of the Hottentots, or the Esquimaux, or

any other alien product of the tender sex! Why, indignation meetings would be called—and with sufficient reason—in every woman's club from Portland to Portland. And was there any excuse for Mr. Morgan or any other man of means invading the art world of Europe, on the beck or at the suggestion of schemers, with the resources of Wall street as a firebrand and New York drafts as bludgeons, and devastate city and country of cherished native treasures?



NOVEMBER CORNFIELD  
By Henry L. Engle

Did America need them, would Americans prize them if they had them, would American art feel their influence, even if they were trotted about the country for general inspection, as Barnum exhibited his freaks?

If a syndicate composed, say, of Morgan, Rockefeller, Carnegie, Senator Clarke, J. J. Hill and similar multimillionaires were to make up a purse of a few hundred or thousand millions and buy up the Louvre, or the Uffizi Museum, or the Rijks Museum or some similar institution and cart it over to New York or Washington, would the enterprise merit more than a thought of wonder—and contempt? Would the general art spirit of this country be enhanced by the project? Would the makers of our art be benefited by this act of virtual vandalism?



LANDSCAPE  
By Hardesty S. Maratta

And, by the way, continued the Moralist, wasn't it a curious commentary on American policy that American captains of finance should spend tens, nay, hundreds or thousands of millions to develop and protect American material interests, and at the same time, through fad or foolishness, leave American art and American artists to languish on the petty sop that the little fellows, who could only afford dollars where the big fellows could squander millions, were willing to throw to them?

Never mind, ye native toilers for the beautiful, the Moralist continued. The tables might be turned, and some day—after the interested were dead—a foreign Rothschild might, in true Morgan style, ask of our Innesses, and Wyants and Martins and such-like—"modern men at their best," but all dead, mind you—the highest prices paid for their works. And on being told, he might say, "I'll go the Yankees one better—quadruple the prices and get the pictures." Then the artists might rest more comfortably through eternity. From present indications, there was more hope—of this kind—in a single tomorrow than in a thousand yesterdays.

A word about Morgan prices and their outcome. Hadn't the magnate, the Moralist asked, utterly and absolutely demoralized the art market by his senseless prodigality, and wasn't a reaction, with consequent slump, inevitable, when his taste for art had been satiated? Through sheer force of money fictitious values now ruled, where art works once went begging. By his "Pike's Peak or bust" policy the magnate had created a sort of personal preserves, which the other fellow didn't dare to invade since he couldn't or wouldn't produce—and Mr. Morgan was willing and able.

But, asked the Moralist, had the Dilettanti ever noticed that people of the cold storage habit often get nipped? Men who had put millions into eggs had had their product come out addled after a year or two. Just the other day in Chicago tons of poultry that had gradually been taking on a cold storage odor for a couple of years were seized by the authorities and tried out for wagon grease. The dear public wasn't in sympathy with the cold storage proposition, and refused to buy. Hence the addle and the taint—and the slump. Wasn't it a foregone conclusion that in time, when the same dear public frowned—as it certainly would—on the get-at-any-price trust methods in art, or Mr. Morgan had ceased to ransack the Old World for offerings to bid on—wasn't it a foregone conclusion that many of his biggest eggs would come out addled and many of his choicest treasures would be found to have taken on a taint?

Leaves and prices had this in common, the Moralist said—they always fell after a frost. Because a man, voracious from mere capacity to buy, chose to pay five dollars a loaf for bread today, was no reason why the hungry should pay more than a nickel tomorrow—and they wouldn't.

REPORTED BY THE SALON'S SECRETARY.



THE FARM FAVORITE  
By Robert W. Grafton